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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

**Pacific
Northwest
Region**

1986

Reviewer's Guide and Response Form

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Proposed Land and Resource Management Plan

Okanogan National Forest

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READEX FICHE

SECTION ONE: YOU AND FOREST PLANNING

NOT JUST ANOTHER PLAN

There are plans around for just about everything. What kinds of plans have you made lately? How many of us can look ahead 10 years or 50 years and decide what kind of a place we want to live in? The plans for your National Forests are an effort to do just that. This is another opportunity for you to be part of the planning process.

WAIT!

Don't put this down! National Forest planning is complicated. This guide will make it easier for you to study the alternatives presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. It also outlines a way in which you can give us your ideas about what you want us to consider in developing a management plan for the Okanogan National Forest.

FOREST PLANS - WHAT'S INSIDE?

The Forest Service manages 155 National Forests across the Nation. These Forests provide products and services such as recreation, timber, grazing, water, minerals, and wildlife for millions of people. People depend on the National Forest resources for jobs as well as recreation and specialized needs. Plans are being prepared on every Forest to decide how to manage lands and resources to meet a variety of needs. The plans will identify the amount of land to be managed for different uses and products without exploiting or degrading the environment. The plans will also show the amounts of different products and services each Forest can provide, depending on which resources (recreation, wildlife, timber, etc.) are emphasized. Additionally, the plan describes the management practices to be used in managing each of the Forest resources.

National Forests are public lands belonging to all people in the United States. Therefore, each plan describes how the resources on each Forest contribute to the national economy and its well-being; as well as to local communities and environments. Each plan lists alternative ways to manage the Forest for different goals and resource mixes. These alternatives have been developed over the past several years, by collecting a variety of information from the Forest, counties, states, and the public.

To implement each final plan, a monitoring and evaluation procedure was developed to identify any improvements necessary as prescribed management practices are carried out. Adjustments may be needed occasionally throughout the life of the Forest Plan. Each Plan will also be re-evaluated, with public comment, at least every 10-15 years, so that new information can be included in decisions.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Since the National Forests are managed for the benefit of all of us, it is important that you and other members of the public give us ideas on how the National Forests should be managed.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Land and Resource Management Resource Plan describes a variety of alternative ways to manage the Okanogan National Forest.

We need your comments and reasons for those comments on the alternatives, plus any other information you want us to consider.

Your response, analyzed along with the responses of other citizens, will be used to develop the final Forest Plan. Information about your desires, interests and needs are an integral part of the decisionmaking process.

USING THIS GUIDE

This guide has been prepared to help you develop your responses. It contains the summary found in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement; a list of the complete set of available documents, and a procedure for your use in preparing your response.

Please take the time to refer to the full set of documents. These are available from the Okanogan National Forest Supervisor's Office and there are reference copies available at local libraries and other locations. Informational meetings are also scheduled during the public review period. See Section 3 of this document for a list of public involvement activities scheduled during the public review period.

Each page of this guide has space for you to make notes to yourself as you review the material.

There is a response form inside the back cover, which may also be helpful in giving us your comments.

TAKE IT STEP BY STEP

Condensing several years of planning into one small document is no easy task. It also means that as a reviewer you will have no easy task. However, if you take it piece by piece, it may be easier. Here are some ideas preparing your response.

1. Visit the Forest. Become acquainted with what is out there. Revisit your favorite places; find some new ones. Take some time to become knowledgeable of the area.

2. Read Section Two in this document, titled "The Summary from the DEIS" which describes the Forest as it looks and is managed today.

3. The complete set of documents includes the full description of issues, alternatives and environmental consequences.

4. Complete your comments and mail them so we receive them before July 15,1985. Use the response form provided for you, or other methods that may feel more comfortable to you.

THE COMPLETE SET OF DOCUMENTS

The complete set of documents available for use in completing your response is listed below:

- This Reviewers' Guide and Summary
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- Appendices to the DEIS
- Map Packet (including maps of the alternative)
- The Proposed Forest Plan

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Chapter 1, Purpose and Need, identifies the laws and regulations used to direct the planning and environmental analysis process. It also identifies the public issues and management concerns about the land and resource management of this National Forest. Audiences of participating publics - organizations, agencies, and local governments - will be particularly interested in this Chapter.

Chapter 2, Alternatives, including the Proposed Action, describes the alternatives, explains their formulation and compares them. This chapter will be of interest to those wanting scientific analysis.

Chapter 3, Affected Environment" presents the biological, physical, social, and economic setting of this National Forest.

Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences," presents the environmental consequences of the alternatives, including unavoidable adverse impacts, irreversible or irretrievable effects, energy requirements, and coordination with other agencies. This chapter is for those interested in a more detailed analysis of the effects of the alternative.

APPENDICES TO THE DEIS

The appendices contain technical discussions about various aspects of the planning process. They contain more detailed descriptions of some environments, analyses, and effects. These documents will be of most use to the professional reviewer.

MAP PACKET

This contains maps of each alternative, plus some resource inventory maps. Information contained on the maps will be of most use to those who are looking for site specificity or who have knowledge of the forest.

PROPOSED FOREST PLAN

This contains information about how the Forest land and resources would be managed if the preferred alternative is implemented. It contains the detailed standards and guidelines for management practices. This document is for the implementors - Forest Supervisors, District Rangers, and their staffs.

It is important to remember that the Proposed Forest Plan is a proposal and that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is a draft. The information gained in the public review process can result in a modified or a new preferred alternative and could result in revision of the Proposed Forest Plan.

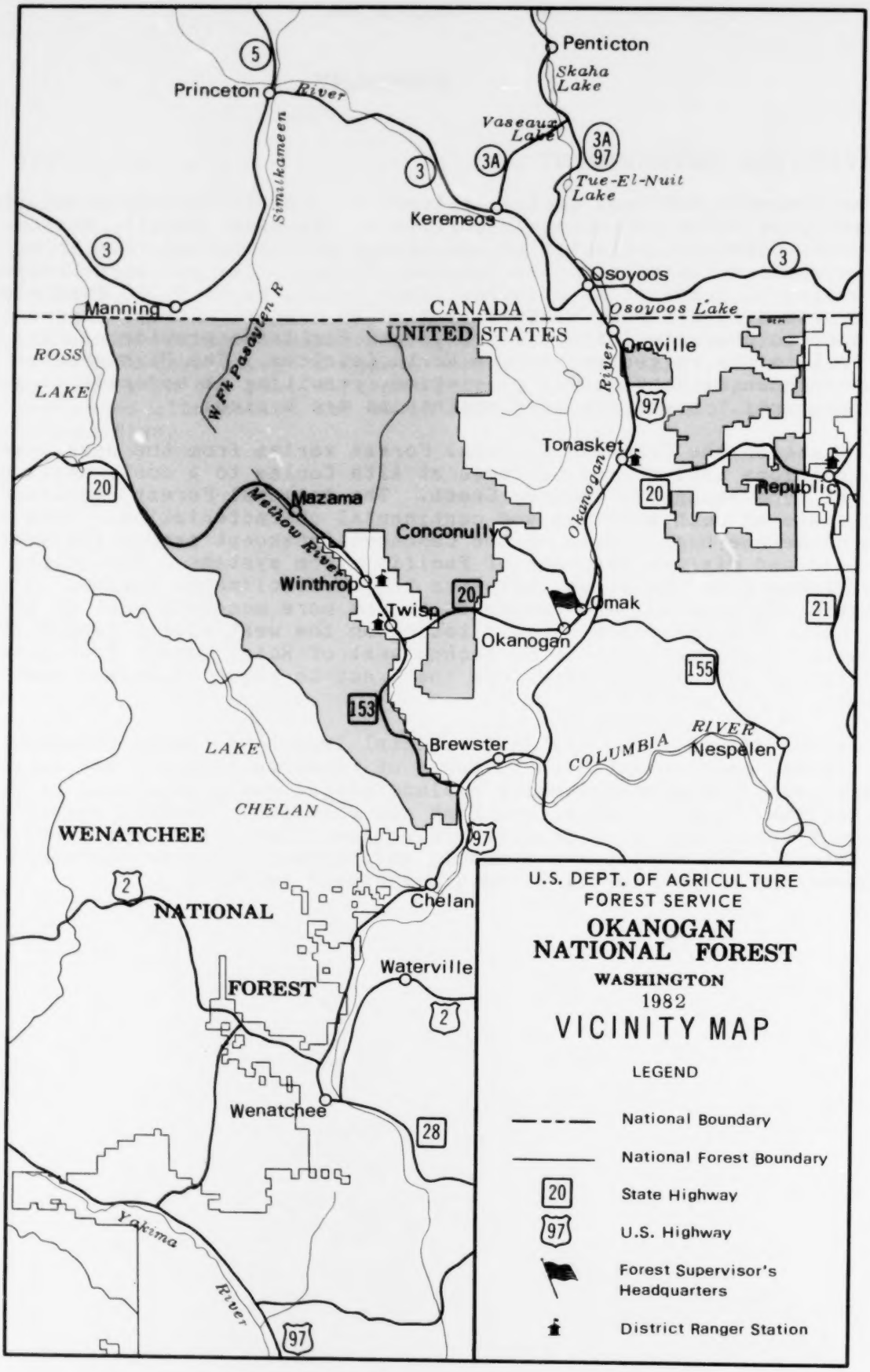
SUMMARY

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Okanogan National Forest is located in North Central Washington, occupying 1,706,000 acres in portion of Okanogan, Skagit, Whatcom and Chelan Counties. Glaciation has played and important role in molding the surface features of the National Forest. The northern Cascades consist of precipitous mountain peaks raning up to 9,000 feet elevation separated by U-Shaped valleys of glacial origin. Steep, rugged topography is characteristic. The Okanogan Highlands provide a sharp contrast to the ruggedness of the North Cascades. The Highlands were overridden by continental glaciation, resulting in moderate to gentle topography. Broad, rounded mountains are typical.

Climate on the Okanogan National Forest varies from the near desert conditions east of the Cascades at Alta Coulee to a cool, moist maritime type along the Cascade Crest. The National Forest possesses climate of both maritime and continental characteristics. This is because the high ridges of the Cascades intercept prevailing westerly winds and disrupt the path of Pacific storm systems. Topography and distance from the ocean influence the local climatic regime. Precipitation is greatest and temperatures are more moderate west of the Crest. Average annual precipitation on the west slopes ranges from 60 inches near Ross Lake to 80 inches west of Rainy Pass. Precipitation declines rapidly eastward from the Crest to about 10 inches near Alta Lake.

Chapter III of the draft Environmental Impact Statement examines the affected environment both in terms of resource elements and support services. Resource elements include water, soil, minerals, wilderness, roadless, timber, range, and fish and wildlife. Support services include activities such as fire protection, roads, and insect and disease control. The social and economic environment are also discussed. Summaries of the forest's resources appear below.


Penticton
Skaha Lake
Princeton
River
Similkameen
Vaseaux Lake
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Tue-El-Nuit Lake
Keremeos
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CANADA
UNITED STATES
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Okanogan River
97
Tonasket
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COLUMBIA RIVER
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2
NATIONAL
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FOREST
Waterville
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28
Yakima River
U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
OKANOGAN
NATIONAL FOREST
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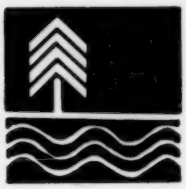
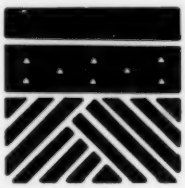
1982
VICINITY MAP
LEGEND
National Boundary
National Forest Boundary
State Highway
U.S. Highway
Forest Supervisor's Headquarters
District Ranger Station



Water
Water is an important resource that helps support the economy of the Okanogan and Methow valleys. Water is a limiting factor in expanding agricultural industries because summer flows are low. Waters on the forest are placed in the highest quality classification used by the State of Washington.



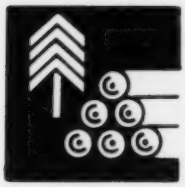
Soils
Soils on the Forest are derived from granitic glacial till, volcanic ash or pumice and residual bedrock. Generally, inherent soil fertility is low.

Minerals
The forest has one of the highest potentials for locatable minerals such as gold, silver, copper and zinc in the Region. Except for uranium the Forest has low potential for energy and leasable minerals. Approximately 38% of the Forest is closed to mineral exploration and development.

Wilderness
The two Wildernesses, the Pasayten and Lake Chelan-Sawtooth, an area of about 626,220 acres, constitute about 37 percent of the forest. Wilderness is managed under a nondegredation policy to protect the qualities unique to the area. Average annual use (1980-1984) has been about 89,000 recreation visitor days.

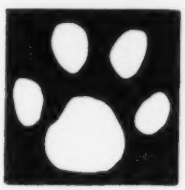
Roadless
Approximately 28 percent of the non-wilderness lands are unroaded and undeveloped. 14 separate areas have been identified totalling 481,368 acres.

Air Quality
The remote location, steep mountainous terrain, daily topographic winds and westerly maritime air patterns produce conditions that generally maintain high air quality.



Timber
About 41 percent of the forest is available, capable and suitable for timber harvest. Current demand for timber is low, although as timber yield from other sources decreases, demand should improve. Local demand for firewood is increasing.

Range
Approximately 53 percent of the forest is grazable land. The current annual grazing capacity is 64,000 Animal Unit Months. Demand slightly exceeds existing supply.



Wildlife and Fish
About 400 species of wildlife and 22 species of fish inhabit the forest. The mule deer is the most abundant (approximately 28,500) and popular animal in the area. The highest density of lynx in the lower 48 states is found on the forest. Other big game wildlife of widespread interest found are mountain goats, bighorn sheep, black bear, elk, moose, mountain lion and turkey.

Economics
Wage and salary employment dominates in Okanogan County, with many working at relatively low incomes. Agriculture, timber and recreation are the three major ecomonies. The forest offers timber for sale where the value of the timber is not sufficient to cover costs.

Social Setting

Okanogan County is large in land base but sparsely populated. The County has experienced recent population growth as newcomers with primarily urban backgrounds move to rural areas to escape city pressures. The greatest density of people is found in and around the towns of Okanogan and Omak. Native Americans make up the largest ethnic minority group.

Visuals

The Okanogan National Forest has some of the most scenic mountain terrain in the North Cascades. The North Cascades Scenic Highway classification resulted from the Washington Wilderness Act of 1984 and reflects the scenic value of that corridor.

Recreation

The favorable climate, clean air and rich diveristy of recreation opportunities annually attracts approximately 1.0 million visitor days to the forest. Year-round recreation is being stressed by nearby communities. Winter sports activites such as downhill and cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and helicopter skiing are becoming increasingly popular.

PURPOSE AND NEED

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) discloses ten alternatives, including an alternative identified as the preferred alternative (which is the "proposed action"). These are alternate ways of managing the land and resouces of the Okanogan National Forest. The preferred alternative is the basis for the accompanying "Proposed Okanogan National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan" (Proposed Forest Plan) document. The purpose of the Forest Plan is to direct and guide all natural resource management activies on the Okanogan National Forest for the next 10 years. Preparation of the Proposed Forest Plan is required by the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resouces Planning Act (RPA) of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976, plus the associated Ntional Forest System Land and Resource Planning Regulations (36 CFR 219).

Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), disclosing a preferred alternative and alternatives to the preferred alternative, is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council on Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR 1500), in order to implement the Forest planning provisions of the NFMA.

As required by NFMA and RPA, the Forest Service has a three-level, integrated planning process. The RPA program establishes long-range national resource objectives. The Regional Guide distributes the Region's portion of the national RPA objectives to each National Forest. It also establishes Regional management standards and guidelines. The Forest Plan is prepared at the National Forest level. A range of alternatives is considered; one of which is designed to meet the current RPA objectives displayed in the Regional Guide. The planning process continuously cycles; information from the forest level flows up to the national level, and is incorporated in the RPA program, and then flows back to the National Forest level.

The planning process specified in the NFMA regulations and the environmental analysis process specified in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations were used in developing this DEIS and the accompanying Proposed Forest Plan. The planning steps employed are:

1. Identification of purpose and need;
2. Preparation of planning criteria;
3. Inventory of data and information collection;
4. Analysis of the management situation;
5. Formulation of alternatives;
6. Estimation of effects of alternatives;
7. Evaluation of alternatives;
8. Recommendation of a preferred alternative;
9. Implementation of the Plan; and
10. Monitoring of implementation and evaluation.

The Okanogan National Forest Supervisor chose a team of specialists (referred to as the interdisciplinary team, or IDT) representing a broad range of disciplines to develop this DEIS and Forest Plan. The first task undertaken by the IDT was to identify major public issues, management concerns and resource opportunities. This was accomplished through an extensive process involving individual members of the public, private landowners adjacent to the Okanogan National Forest, other agencies, the Colville Confederated Tribes, and groups of individuals with similar interests.

Careful review of the issues and concerns reveals two common threads among topics people raised: vegetation management and access. Management decisions made through this Forest Plan will greatly influence these two threads.

Issues and concerns identified below are the result of public comment gained through public involvement over a several year period:

Soil, Water and Air
Ecosystems and Environmental Quality Protection
Riparian Protection

Minerals
Mineral Resource Activities

Fire
Fire Management

Infrastrucure Improvements
Road and Access Management

Wilderness
Wilderness Management

Roadless
Roadless Area Management

Timber
Timber Harvest Level
Wood Waste Utiliation
Silvicultural Treatments
Logging Methods
Lodgepole Pine Management

Range
Grazing Levels

Research Natural Areas
Research Natural Area Designation

Wildlife
Big Game Management
Small Game/Non Game Management
Fish Habitat Management
Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Management

Economics
Economic Efficiency
Timber Harvest Cost Efficiency
Economic Effects on Local People

Social
Social Effects on Local People

Recreation/Leisure
Winter Recreation Opportunities
Off-Road Vehicle Opportunities
Variety of Recreation
Scenic Management
North Cascades Scenic Highway Management
Wild, Scenic and Recreation River Designation
Historical Site Protection

Miscellaneous
Multiple Use
RPA Targets

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives considered are disclosed in Chapter II of draft Environmental Impact Statement. Each alternative is designed to manage the land to achieve selected goals and objectives. Some of these objectives, such as maintaining air and water quality, are common to all alternatives; other objectives, such as the mix and amount of resource outputs, vary among the alternatives.

Management areas are areas of the forest to which a set of management practices, standards and guidelines apply. Management areas have been identified for each of the alternatives on maps which accompany this summary. In conjunction with the creation these management areas, "management prescriptions" were developed which apply to specific management areas. To direct on-the-ground management, standards and guidelines for management were written and/or incorporated from the Regional Guide.

Benchmarks are analyses which help define the maximum economic, biological and recreational resource production opportunities. They also assist in evaluating the compatibilities and conflicts between market and nonmarket objectives and delineate the range within which integrated alternatives can be developed. They are not necessarily implementable, however.

The following benchmarks are required by Agency direction:

Minimum level: This benchmark specifies the minimum level of management which would be needed to maintain the Forest as per existing laws, regulations and Executive Orders.

Maximum Present Net Value Based on Established Market Price: This benchmark specifies the management of the Forest which would maximize the present net value of those outputs that have an established market price.

Maximum Present Net Value Including Assigned Values: This benchmark specifies the management which would maximize the present net value of those outputs that have either an established market price or assigned monetary value.

Current Level: This benchmark specifies the management of the National Forest most likely to be implemented in the future if current direction is followed. This benchmark is the basis for the "Current Direction" (or No Action) alternative.

Maximum Resource Levels: Each of these benchmarks estimate the maximum capabilities of the Forest to provide a single resource emphasis level: Timber, Range, Wildlife, Roaded Recreation and Unroaded Recreation.

Other benchmark analysis is conducted to determine the effect of various minimum management requirements, discretionary constraints and the restrictions on timber harvest rotations.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study

Several alternatives were considered which were eliminated from detailed study. These alternatives are:

1. Benchmarks
2. Alternatives outside the Agency's authority
3. Alternatives to higher level plans
4. Alternatives to decisions incorporated by reference.

Alternatives Considered in Detail

Ten alternatives were considered in detail. The first five are required by Pacific Northwest Region planning direction.

Alternative A

This alternative is the **NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE** required by NEPA regulations and represents a continuation of current management direction as defined by the existing land use and functional resource plans. The goals of Alternative A are to emphasize visual quality in visually sensitive areas of the Okanogan National Forest while providing a high level of timber outputs and recreation opportunity. Other resources are provided at levels which maximize present net value. Because this alternative portrays direction in based on existing plans, the alternative does not contain the minimum management requirements (MMRs) required in the Regulations promulgated from the National Forest Management Act. It is the only alternative that does not incorporate MMRs.

Alternative B

The goal of Alternative B is to meet all resource targets assigned to the Okanogan National Forest by the 1980 **Resources Planning Act** (RPA) program in the most cost effective manner.

Alternative C

The goal of Alternative C is to emphasize the production of non-market resources, including roaded and unroaded recreation, wildlife and fish, water, and areas of high scenic quality. Other resources would be managed at a level to maximize present net value.

Alternative D

The goal of Alternative D is to emphasize those management practices and activities which would increase revenues to the Federal Government. Revenue producing activities primarily are timber harvest, range use by domestic livestock, use of developed recreation sites where fees are charged, and issuance of special use permits for recreation activities such as at Loup Loup Ski Area and Early Winters.

Other resources would be managed at a level that maximize present net value.

Alternative E

The goal of Alternative E is to retain the current roadless areas to meet benefits for scenery, unroaded recreation, wildlife, and other non-market resources. Intensive timber management would be practiced on roaded lands in order to maintain a moderate level of harvest. The objective is to maximize the production of timber from roaded areas, while providing other resources at levels which maximize present net value.

Alternative F

The goal of Alternative F is to emphasize the production of timber at low costs, while providing optimal management of mule deer habitat in the Methow Valley. Other resources would be provided at levels which maximize present net value.

Alternative G

The goal of Alternative G is to produce quality wildlife habitat and high scenic values in key areas. Other resources would be managed at levels to maximize present net value.

ALTERNATIVE G (DEPARTURE)

The goal, objectives and other features of this alternative are identical to Alternative G except that a moderate level of timber (80 MMBF per year, 16 MMCF per year) would be provided in the first decade. This alternative would depart from non-declining even-flow during the first decade (for the next 10 years the harvest level is raised above that which could be sustained at a constant or increasing amount).

Alternative H

The goal of Alternative H is to produce moderate levels of timber while simultaneously providing large amounts of high quality wildlife habitat. The objective is to maximize timber outputs while managing other resources at levels which maximize present net value.

ALTERNATIVE I

This alternative was presented to the Okanogan National Forest by a coalition of individuals from various environmental organizations. The goals of this alternative are to retain most of the roadless areas so they could be considered for future classification as Wilderness, to manage key wildlife habitat for wildlife benefit, and manage areas adjacent to major travel routes for their scenic qualities.

PROPOSED PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The proposed preferred alternative for the Okanogan National Forest is Alternative G (Departure).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

CHAPTER IV OF THE DEIS provides the scientific and analytic basis for the comparison of alternatives. Virtually all the environmental consequences that would result would be due to changes in vegetation and access. Those alternatives which would have the largest amount of changes in these two attributes would have the most environmental change.

Physical Consequences

Several indices of water quality would be affected, but none extensively. Water quantity would be increased over the short term in small watersheds, but not for large watersheds or for long periods.

Alternatives A, B, D, G, G (departure) and H would have the greatest potential for reducing soil productivity through reduction of soil nutrient levels because they would have the most tractor yarding and opportunity for complete slash disposal. Mitigation measures would prevent widespread reduction of inherent soil productivity.

Alternatives B and F would have the greatest potential for increasing geological hazards because harvest and road construction are highest on the steep slopes. This potential would not be large, based on previous experience.

All alternatives would inhibit mineral exploration in some areas of known high and medium-high mineral potential. Alternative C includes the most acreage (220,000), and Alternative D the least acreage (90,000) of high and medium mineral potentials in withdrawals and "highly restrictive" management prescriptions.

The levels of air quality, as indexed by predicted total suspended particulates, would vary little from alternative to alternative. Alternative D would produce the greatest amount of total suspended particulates. Alternatives C and I would produce the least. Mitigation measures would be implemented in any alternative to maintain air quality.

Timber management activities in lodgepole pine and associated species and natural stands within roadless areas would increase the diversity of age classes within these stands and reduce the natural fuel buildup. The overall fire hazard and potential for large destructive wildfires would be reduced. Alternatives D and H would have the greatest impact on reducing overall fire hazrd in the long-term. Alternatives C, E, and I would least reduce total fire hazard. The fire risk would be the greatest during the plan period in Alternative D due to the increase in fuel hazard from timber harvest activities. The

increase in person-caused fire risk would be the same for all alternatives.

The area available for future Wilderness consideration by Congress would vary between alternatives. All alternatives except E would reduce the amount of inventoried roadless area on the National Forest. Cumulatively, the most reduction would occur with Alternative D, followed by Alternatives H, A, B, G and G (Departure), F, C, and I. Roadless areas could be considered for Wilderness recommendation at the time of the next cycle of planning.

Biological Consequences

Changes in the kind and amount of plant species is expected to be small in all alternatives. The largest timber growth would occur in Alternatives D, followed by Alternatives F and H. Alternatives I and C would experience the least growth increase.

Range grazing capacity would increase substantially with Alternative D. All alternatives except I would produce more forage than currently exists.

Potential for noxious weed invasion would be expected to increase as acreage of disturbed soil increases. Alternative D would have the greatest acreage disturbed and Alternative I would have the lowest. Alternatives A, F, and G (Departure) would also have high amounts of acreage disturbed in the plan period.

No threatened or endangered plant or animal would be significantly affected by any alternative.

Alternatives C and I maintain or increase deer winter habitat capability over time. Alternatives G and G (Departure) drop 6% from the existing during the plan period, maintain this level for three decades and then increase above existing levels. Alternative B drops 6% in the plan period, followed by negligible drops thereafter. Alternative H also drops 6% in the plan period, drops more in decades 2 and 3 and regains status quo thereafter. In Alternatives A, D, E, and F habitat capability decrease 7% to 17% in the first decade, and continues toward a large reduction of 23% to 53% by the end of 50 years.

Over the next 50 years habitat capability for all old growth/mature confier indicator species would decrease from existing levels in all alternatives. Alternatives I decreases the least and Alternative D decreases the most.

Habitat capability for lynx would increase for all alternatives except A begining in the second decade. Alternative H increases the greatest amount, 128% in the plan period and Alternative A doesn't increase at all.

Table 1 ranks each alternative as to how well habitat capability is provided.

TABLE 1. Comparison of Relative Rankings of Alternatives to Provide for Wildlife Habitat Capability (underlined = alternatives of same value)

Species/ Habitat	Best <----------> Worst									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mule and White-tailed Deer/ Winter Range	I	C	G	G-D	B	H	A	E	F	D
Wildlife Indicator Species/ Old Growth and Mature Conifers	I	C	E	G	H	G-D	A	B	F	D
Woodpeckers/Snags	H	C	I	G	G-D	B	F	E	A	D
Lynx/Lodgepole	H	G	G-D	C	D	B	F	I	E	A

Economic Consequences

The alternatives would have effects on three primary local economies: timber, ranching and recreation. Potentially, mining could become an important economic activity in the County with any alternative, but isn't currently.

Alternatives B, D, F and G (departure) would contribute to for some level of economic growth in the timber industry locally for the short term. Alternative A would maintain its existing contribution to the local timber economy for the short run and would not for the long run. Alternatives C, E, G, H and I would sustain only a reduced local timber economy. Only Alternative D would provide for growth over a long time.
Potentially, forest industry employment and wages would be highest in Alternative D. Secondary employment, population and, to a lesser extent, county unemployment rates would also reflect these trends. Alternatives C, E and I would employ fewer forest industry and secondary workers and provide lower total forest industry wages relative to existing levels.

Alternatives B, D, F, G, G (Departure) and H potentailly would offer the greater domestic grazing use of National Forest lands and would, thereby, most contribute to the profitability of individual ranches.

All alternatives would provide economic benefits to the local recreation economy.

More Okanogan National Forest revenues to the Treasury and to Okanogan County would be generated by Alternatives B, F and G (Departure) than the existing situation. Alternative D would generate the most revenues and Alternative I, the least. Alternatives C, E, G and H would provide lower forest revenues relative to existing levels.

The alternatives' Present Net Values include non-cash benefits such as dispersed recreation values and wildlife and fish user days. Alternative A, followed by Alternatives C, G (Departure) and G would have the highest Present Net Values. Alternative B followed by Alternatives E, D and I would have the lowest Present Net Values.

All alternatives were developed to emphasize cost effective attainment of resource objectives on a forest basis. In Alternative I, no timber sales would be offered where costs exceed revenues produced. In Alternatives D, E and F, timber sales would be offered where costs exceed revenues, however the marginal return for dollars spent would be maximized when possible. In Alternatives A, B and H, costs would exceed revenues when necessary to attain non-timber sale resource objectives. Costs would generally not exceed revenues in Alternatives C, G and G (Departure). Exceptions would be permitted where there are demonstrable benefits to other resources.

Social Consequences

The major social consequences would be indirect as consequences of changes in employment opportunities and direct through recreation opportunities. Implementation of any of the alternatives would not have substantial effects on minorities, women or civil rights.

Alternative D would stimulate relatively large and rapid cyclical social changes corresponding with swings in local timber economy employment. Alternatives C and I would likely slow general future social changes in the long-term. Reductions in employment opportunities associated with Alternatives I and C could cause substantial out-migration from the area in the short-term.

Table 2 shows the acreage of each type of dispersed recreation opportunity provided would directly vary between alternatives

TABLE 2. Recreation Opportunities by Alternative

Alternative	Recreation Opportunity			
	Primitive and Semi-primitive Non-motorized	Semi-primitive Motorized	Roaded Natural	Roaded Modify and Rural
	thousand acres			
Current Situation	999	74	403	230
A (Current Direction)	745	30	438	493
B (RPA)	760	34	97	815
C	918	74	245	469
D	626	0	163	917
E	1011	96	24	575
F	854	57	24	771
G	791	41	179	695
G (Departure)	791	41	179	695
H	690	0	24	992
I	1101	0	139	466

All alternatives would provide primitive recreation opportunities only in the Pasayten and Lake Chelan-Sawtooth Wildernesses.

All alternatives except E, I and C would reduce the number of miles of trail outside wilderness. Cumulatively, the most reduction would occur with Alternative D, followed by Alternatives H, B, G and G (Departure), F and A. Alternatives E, I and C would require additional trails to provide access within areas managed for semi-primitive recreation opportunities.

The future setting of the surrounding area as viewed from within the development boundaries of the proposed Early Winters facility would vary by alternative. Alternative C would retain the most surrounding area in a natural appearing or slightly altered setting, followed by Alternatives A, E, I, G and G (Departure), B, F, D and H.

Cumulatively, Alternative E would result in the most area with winter operating seasons and route restrictions on snowmobiling and cross-country skiing, followed by Alternatives F, D, B, H, I, G and G (Departure), A and C.

All alternatives would maintain preservation visual quality levels on 626,200 acres in the Pasayten and Lake Chelan-Sawtooth Wildernesses and all alternatives would maintain high (retention) visual quality levels in the North Cascades Scenic highway as required by the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984.

All alternatives except I, C and A would reduce the amount of area on the National Forest where high and moderate (retention and partial retention) visual quality levels are maintained. Cumulatively, the most reduction would occur with Alternative H, which would maintain

high visual quality levels only in the North Cascades Scenic Highway, followed by Alternatives H, D, B, F, G and G (Departure), and E.

The following rivers are considered for study for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System: Methow, Chewuck, Twisp, Lost and Pasayten Rivers and Wolf Creek. Recommendations vary by alternative. Those revers recommended for study would be managed to maintain their characteristics.

Short-term Uses and Long-term Productivity

Each alternative was developed to assure that the standards and guidelines from laws, regulations and Forest Service policy could be met. Long-term productivity of the forest ecosystems would be maintained in all alternatives.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

All alternatives would make irreversible commitments of resources. Alternative A, followed by D, would make the greatest overall irreversible commitment of resources in terms of old growth habitat harvested. Alternative D would road the most acres within roadless areas. Alternative I would not harvest any acres of old growth, while Alternatives E and I would construct roads in the fewest roadless areas. Mineral extraction would be permitted in all alternatives. Accessibility to minerals would be highest in Alternative D followed by Alternatives G and G (Departure). Alternative C followed by Alternative I would have the lowest accessibility for mineral extraction. The greatest irretrievable loss of timber volume (growth and mortality) occurs in Alternative I.

Adverse Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided

Some adverse effects that cannot be avoided are included in the alternatives. Although these effects are technically feasible to avoid, the costs involved would make total mitigation impractical. These effects include: short-term scenic values; temporary increases in fire risk; temporary disruption of recreation uses; short-term disruption of forage use by livestock and wildlife; temporary noise during road construction and logging operations and while people use motors during recreation; temporary, small degradations of air quality during prescribed burning; small increases in sediment and water temperature; temporary disruption of wildlife; damage to seedlings by grazing animals; insect and/or disease infestations; noxious weed infestations; and dollar costs to both the government and to users of the Forest to implement any of the alternatives.

Effects on Prime Farmlands, Wetlands and Floodplains

No prime farmlands are present on the Okanogan National Forest. Floodplains and wetlands on the Forest would have only minor effects. Off-Forest floodplains and wetlands would not be effected measurably.

Unchanged Conditions

The following conditions remain unchanged for each alternative: operation of Loup Loup ski bowl; Early Winters developments; helicopter ski permits; mining; retention of the North Cascades Smokejumper Base; the use of herbicides on Forest; Wilderness areas; land exchanges; housing; and community services. Several factors, most notably air quality, would not be affected much by any alternative.

Possible Conflicts Between the Proposed Action and Objectives of Other Agencies

There are no known conflicts between the proposed action and the objectives of Federal, Regional, State, aand local land use plans, policies and controls for the area concerned.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Table 3 and Figure 1 compare the alternatives. Table 3 displays how the alternatives respond to major issues and national concerns. Because this is a summary not all major issues are addressed and those that are addressed are done so only with quantitative indicators.

Figure 1 graphically compares selected activities, outputs and effects of the alternatives. The amount of timber offered for sale would vary from 42 million to 94 million board feet per year for the next 10 years. The area of even-aged management for the next 10 years would vary from 4000 to 9400 acres. Area of lodgepole pine harvest for the next 10 years would vary from 300 to 2600 acres. Area of selection harvest for the next 10 years would vary from zero to 480 acres. The area of pre-commercial thinning for the next 10 years would vary from 2300 to 3600 acres. The area of semi-primitive management areas would vary from zero to 410,500 acres; these are in addition to Wilderness (626,200) and North Cascades Scenic Highway (88,000 acres). The habitat capability for number of wintering deer 15 years from now would vary from 10,100 to 16,500. The amount of road that would be constructed during the next 10 years would vary from 190 to 570 miles. The area assigned to old growth prescriptions would vary from zero to 24,000 acres; this doesn't include acres set aside to no harvest prescriptions. Present net value would vary from 241.9 million dollars to 317.1 million dollars.

TABLE 3 Quantitative Indicators of Responsiveness of Alternatives to Major Issues and National Concerns

				Timber Issues			Wildlife Issues		Community Effects Issues 4/		
		Decade 1 Average per Year								Annual Change in Jobs 5/ and Income	
ALTERNATIVES	PNV $ Million	Net Receipts $ Million	Noncash Benefits $ Million	First Decade Harvest Annual MMBF	LTSY MMCF 1/ decade	Suitable Avail Timber Lands 1000 Ac	Old 2/ Growth 1st/5th 1000 Ac	Deer 3/ by Decade 1st/5th 1000 Ac	Annual Change in Payments to County $ Million	Jobs Percent	Income Percent
A (Cur Dir)	317.1	11.6	6.5	74.4	181.2	482.6	33/23	15.2/ 9.9	0	0	0
C	305.8	10.4	6.7	53.4	166.6	461.2	49/42	16.5/16.5	-.3	-29	-28
G (Depart)	287.1	10.7	6.5	79.8	199.9	568.4	44/34	15.5/17.4	.1	13	10
G	282.5	9.6	6.5	64.2	200.0	570.0	47/34	15.5/17.4	-.2	- 8	-10
H	277.7	9.6	6.2	68.8	209.8	594.0	47/41	15.5/16.5	-.1	- 4	- 6
I	264.8	9.0	6.4	41.5	137.7	337.0	49/49	16.5/16.5	-.5	-43	42
D	260.6	9.9	5.1	93.9	220.8	639.4	44/31	13.6/ 7.8	.3	31	25
F	258.0	7.0	5.6	77.5	192.8	564.5	44/32	13.6/12.7	.1	7	5
E	249.1	8.9	5.6	58.9	149.7	423.5	44/39	14.9/ 9.3	-.2	-19	-19
B	241.9	8.2	5.7	77.8	205.2	612.0	43/34	15.5/15.2	.1	8	6

1/ Long Term Sustained Yield in Millions of Cubic Feet

2/ Mixed conifer old-growth habitat outside wilderness for first and fifth decades

3/ Deer winter range habitat capability for first and fifth decades

4/ Increase and change from A

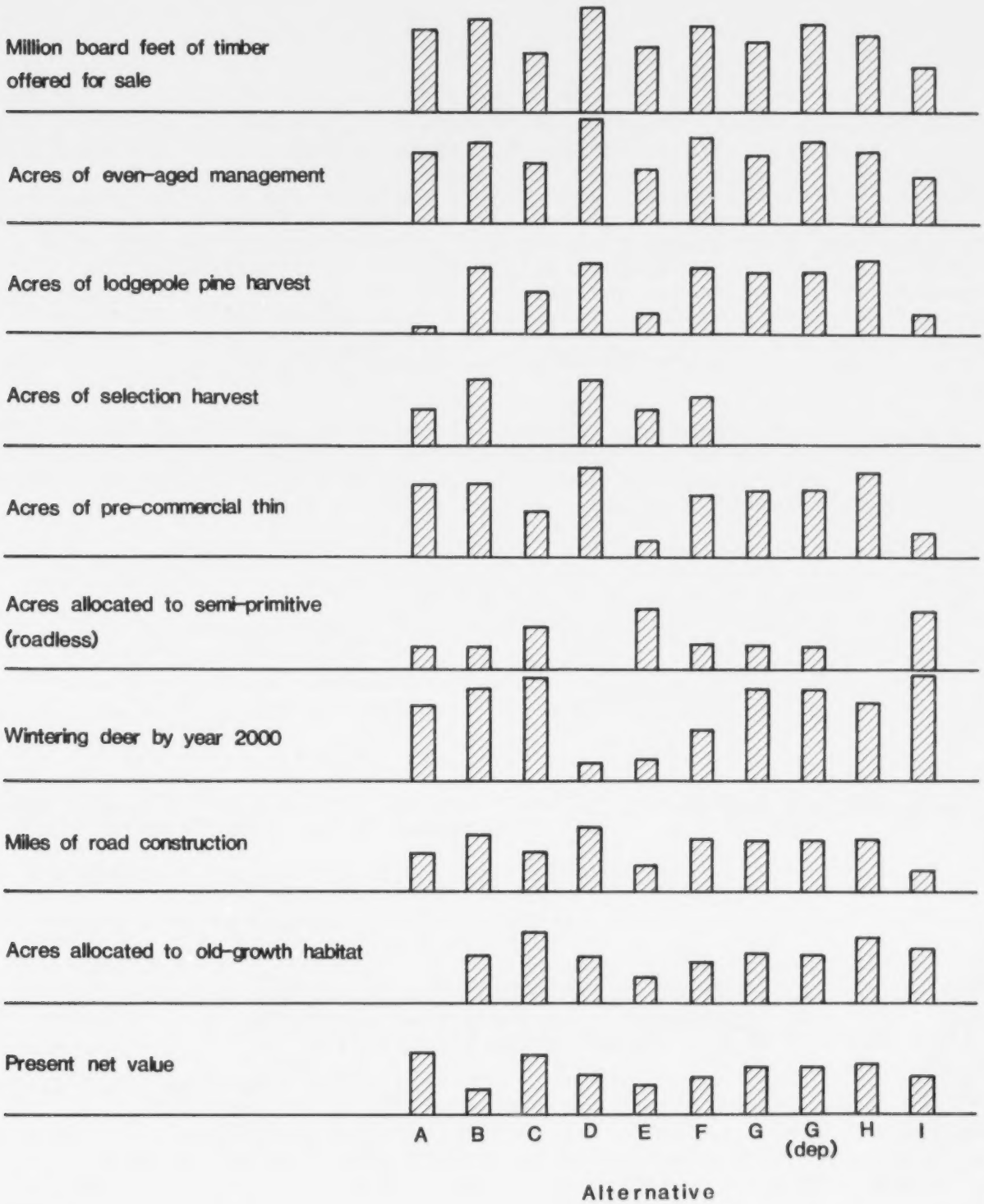
5/ Jobs include primary and secondary employment

TABLE 3 Quantitative Indicators of Responsiveness of Alternatives to Major Issues and National Concerns

	Recreation Issues							Mineral Issues
	Developed	Roaded	Unroaded	Visual Quality Level Retention	Partial Retention	Wild and Scenic Rivers % Inventoried Classification Maintained	Roadless Areas	Acres of High Mineral Probability Having High Access Restrictions (1000 Ac)6/
ALTERNATIVES	1000 Recreation Visitor Days 1st/5th Decades			1000 Ac	1000 Ac		1000 Ac	
A (Cur Dir)	622/1042	349/631	85/108	298	289	98	148.7	171.6
C	622/1042	307/518	102/173	465	146	100	365.6	219.9
G (Depart)	622/1042	324/582	81/103	329	56	95	206.5	144.3
G	622/1042	324/582	81/103	329	56	95	206.5	144.3
H	596/ 998	318/602	80/ 67	88	0	65	64.1	137.8
I	622/1042	292/395	98/264	592	22	100	475.4	209.2
D	622/1042	339/644	85/ 72	88	75	75	0	90.1
F	587/ 983	304/369	76/ 97	309	0	74	286.9	173.1
E	587/ 983	307/415	103/277	505	0	79	481.4	205.0
B	622/1042	314/565	78/ 99	220	45	88	168.1	171.0

6/ Includes high and medium-high mineral potential areas withdrawn or recommended for withdrawal or having high access restrictions.

FIGURE 1 Comparison of Alternatives. Only compare alternatives for each item (line). The scale on the bars changes from line to line.



This Proposed Forest Plan has been prepared according to Secretary of Agriculture regulations (36 CFR 219) which are based on the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA). The plan has also been developed in accordance with regulations (40 CFR 1500) for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Because this plan is considered a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, a detailed statement (environmental impact statement) has been prepared as required by NEPA. The Forest Plan represents the implementation of the preferred alternative as identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Forest Plan.

If any particular provision of this proposed action, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances, is held invalid, the remainder of the proposed action and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

Additional information about this plan is available from:

Forest Supervisor
Okanogan National Forest
P.O. Box 950
1240 Second Avenue South
Okanogan, Washington 98840

SECTION THREE: YOUR TURN

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Since the National Forests are managed to benefit all of us, it is important that you and other members of the public give us your ideas on how you think National Forests should be managed.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Forest Plan describe the National Forest and display a variety of alternative ways to manage it. This period of public review of these documents is your opportunity to analyze the alternatives and share your comments.

THE DECISIONMAKING PROCESS

When the public review period ends, the responses will be analyzed. The Forest Supervisor and Regional Forester will review and evaluate the analysis of those responses and use the analyses of the public's comments -- along with other factors, including legal constraints, resource capability, resource protection, economic effects, etc., -- to decide on the final Forest Plan.

The final plan will be described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and in the Forest Plan document. It will display how the public input was used in developing the final Forest Plan.

THE RESPONSE FORM

In the pocket inside the back cover is a response form, which may help you in sending us your comments. There are ideas and hints on the response form which may be useful as you develop your comments.

If you disregard the response form, send us your comments in any format you find suitable. Even verbal comments are appreciated. Contact the Forest Public Affairs Officer or the Planning Team Leader and they will help you document your verbal comments.

For the Okanogan National Forest these contacts are:

Public Affairs Officer - Allen Gibbs
Planning Team Leader - Tim Tolle

Individual comments are the most important input we can receive. Your interests, desires, and needs -- expressed in comments on the alternatives -- are critical in helping us analyze all of the input.

INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

A number of informational meetings are being scheduled during the public review period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Here is a list of meeting places. Times and exact locations will be announced later.

In addition, if your organization would like a presentation or informal discussion on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, contact either the Forest Public Affairs Officer or the Forest Planning Team Leader to schedule an appropriate time.

Response Form

for the

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Okanogan National Forest

DUE BACK JULY 15, 1986

STEP 1. RESPONSE FORM

This response form has been designed to use with the Reviewer's Guide and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Land and Resource Management Plan, Okanogan National Forest.

Its prepaid mailer is ready to be sent. Just staple and drop in the mail.

The Reviewer's Guide has been prepared to help you develop your response. The full set of documents is available at local Forest Service offices and libraries. Section One of the Reviewer's Guide describes the contents of the complete set of documents. Section Two of the Guide summarizes the information in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and Section Three of the Guide lists the locations where these documents are available for review.

Your comments are important in developing a final Forest Plan that is most responsive to public needs, desires, and interests. The more specific your comments are, the more use we can make of them.

After the public review period is over, all responses will be analyzed. The Forest Supervisor and the Regional Forester will then review and evaluate the analysis of those responses. They will then use the analyses of the public input along with other factors, including legal constraints, resource capability and protection, economic stability, to decide on the final Forest Plan.

The analysis of public responses includes the following process:

- Date stamp, number, and read all responses.
- Identify comments and reasons for comments about the different parts of the DEIS and planning process.
- Code the comments so we can keep track of them.
- Analyze and combine all comments and reasons into categories such as issues, alternatives, adequacy of document, etc.
- Forest Supervisor and Regional Forester evaluate the analysis of public comment and use in developing the final Environmental Impact Statement or in identifying the need to issue new DEIS.
- Issue final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a new Draft EIS. Include responses to all substantive comments in new document.
- Issue record of decision with rationale, direction, and data.
- Mail final document to respondees.

STEP 2. HOW DO THE ALTERNATIVES RESPOND TO THE ISSUES?

Understanding the issues and alternatives is critical to responding to this DEIS. The issues and alternatives are described in the Reviewer's Guide and in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The issues affect what the Forest produces and the services it provides. Varying the levels of goods and services produced by each alternative has different effects on the environment (e.g., land, water resources, people and dollars). Information on how the alternatives respond to the following issues can be found in the Reviewer's Guide and in the DEIS.

The following issues on the Okanogan National Forest are briefly listed below:

1. Ecosystems and environmental quality proteciton.
2. Riparian protection
3. Mineral resource activities
4. Fire management
5. Read and access management
6. Wilderness management
7. Roadless area management
8. Timber harvest level
9. Wood waste utilization
10. Silvicultural treatments
11. Logging methods
12. Lodgepole pine management
13. Grazing levels
14. Research natural area designation
15. Big game management
16. Small game/non-game management
17. Fish habitat management
18. Threatened, endangered, and sensitive species management
19. Economic efficiency
20. Timber harvest cost efficiency
21. Economic effects on local people
22. Social effects on local people
23. Winter recreation opportunities
24. Off-road vehicle opportunities
25. Variety of recreation
26. Scenic management
27. North Cascades Scenic Highway management
28. Wild, Scenic, and Recreation River designation
29. Historical site protection
30. Multiple use
31. RPA targets

STEP 3. YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVES

Since everyone views the Forest differently, you may want to indicate (for your benefit) how well <u>you</u> think each alternative responds to the issues. Fill in the blanks according to how well you feel the alternative responds to the issue. As all issues are not important to each person, you may want to check the issues that are important to <u>you</u>. There is additional space provided for you to add issues that you feel have not been addressed. (If you have questions about the issues, check the Reviewer's Guide and the DEIS, Chapter One and Appendix A.)

Please place a number (5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 in each box to indicate how you feel each alternative addresses each alternative.

<responds well 5 4 3 2 1 does not respond>

ISSUES	check if issue is important to you.	ALTERNATIVES A	B	C	D	E	F	G	G Dep	H	I
1. Ecosystems and environmental quality proteciton.											
2. Riparian protection											
3. Mineral resource activities											
4. Fire management											
5. Read and access management											
6. Wilderness management											
7. Roadless area management											
8. Timber harvest level											
9. Wood waste utilization											

ISSUES	check if issue is important to you.	ALTERNATIVES								
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	G Dep	H	I
10. Silvicultural treatments											
11. Logging methods											
12. Lodgepole pine management											
13. Grazing levels											
14. Research natural area designation											
15. Big game management											
16. Small game/ non-game management											
17. Fish habitat management											
18. Threatened, endangered, and sensitive species management											
19. Economic efficiency											
20. Timber harvest cost efficiency											
21. Economic effects on local people											
22. Social effects on local people											
23. Winter recreation opportunities											
24. Off-road vehicle opportunities											
25. Variety of recreation											
26. Scenic management											

ISSUES	check if issue is important to you.	ALTERNATIVES A	B	C	D	E	F	G	G Dep	H	I
27. North Cascades Scenic Highway management											
28. Wild, Scenic, and Recreation River designation											
29. Historical site protection											
30. Multiple use											
31. RPA targets											

STEP 4. DESCRIBE NEW ISSUES

If you listed new issues under STEP 3, please describe them in the space below. Use additional sheets as needed.

STEP 5. COMMENTING ON THE ALTERNATIVE

The following pages have space for your comments on eight alternatives. Select the alternatives you want to comment on, and write in the spaces provided. As you make your comment, be sure to discuss the strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, changes you would like to see, and the rationale behind your comments. Make your comments as specific as you can.

If you need more space, attach additional sheets. Be sure to reference the alternative you are commenting on.

As you comment on the alternatives, you may want to consider such things as:

- local, state, and national needs
- if options are kept open for the future
- the balance of goods and services by alternative
- environmental consequences

Alternative A - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative B - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative C - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative D - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative E - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative F - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative G - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative G (departure) - Is this your preferred alternative?
[ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative H - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

Alternative I - Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes; [ ] No

STEP 6. NEW ALTERNATIVE

If you feel that none of the alternatives described in the DEIS meet your perception of how you would like to see the National Forest managed, then describe your proposed alternative below. Try to describe it as fully as you can in order for us to be able to evaluate it. The outline used to describe each alternative in the DEIS and reviewer's guide may be useful to you. You may want to describe how well your new alternative responds to the issues.

New Alternative: ____ Is this your preferred alternative? [ ] Yes [ ] No

STEP 7. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Feel free to use the space below to make additional comments about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the Draft Forest Plan, or the Forest Planning process. (Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

A. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Draft Forest Plan, or the Forest Planning process, etc.

B. Overall management of the National Forests: The National Forests are directed to be managed for maximum net public benefits. Please describe what you feel are the most important benefits and why.

STEP 8. If you need more space, add some pages. Make sure they are firmly attached to this response form.

STEP 9. FOR THE RECORD

Your response will become part of the official records for the Okanogan National Forest's Draft Environmental Impact Statement. We need to know who you are representing, along with your name and address.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

_____

_____

CITY_____STATE_____COUNTY_____ZIP_____

REPRESENTING:

_____MYSELF

_____ORGANIZATION, please list_____

If you still have unanswered questions or concerns, please feel free to stop by the Okanogan National Forest Supervisor's Office, or call (509) 422-2704. The Forest staff will be more than willing to talk with you.

Each person who responds will receive a copy of the final EIS.

STEP 10. Mail your response before July 15, 1986.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1986-0-693-057/28001

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